

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. - 3. (Cancel)

4. (New) A tongue depressor comprising an elongated main body extending in an elongate direction, said main body having an elongated hollow passageway, said main body having a first end portion and a second end portion, said first end portion having an opening contiguous with one end of said passageway, said second end portion closing off an opposite end of said passageway, said main body having opposed first and second side parts which are generally parallel to one another, longitudinal convex protrusions disposed on said first and second side and longitudinally extending perpendicular to said elongate direction, said second end portion of said main body having opposed first and second outer surfaces, and first outer surface being an extension of said first side part and extending generally parallel to said elongate direction, said second outer surface being an extension of said second side part and defining a convergent section which converges toward said first outer surface.

5. (New) A tongue depressor according to claim 4 wherein said convergent section forms an acute angle with said first outer surface.

6. (New) A tongue depressor according to claim 4 wherein said convergent section is disposed at an acute angle relative to said elongate direction.

7. (New) A tongue depressor according to claim 4 wherein said convergent section is generally flat.

8. (New) A tongue depressor according to claim 4 wherein said main body has opposed third and fourth side parts extending generally parallel to said elongate direction, said second first end portions of said main body having opposed third and fourth outer surfaces which are extensions of said third and fourth side parts respectively, said third and fourth outer surfaces extending in a non-parallel direction.

9. (New) A tongue depressor according to claim 8 wherein said third and fourth outer surfaces converge toward one another.

10. (New) A tongue depressor according to claim 8 wherein said third and fourth outer surfaces extend at an acute angle relative to said elongate direction.

11. (New) A tongue depressor comprising an elongated main body extending in an elongate direction, said main body having an elongated hollow passageway, said main body having a first end portion and a second end portion, said first end portion having an opening contiguous with one end of said passageway, said second end portion closing off an opposite end of said passageway, said main body having opposed first and second side parts which are generally parallel to one another, said second end portion of said main body having opposed first and second outer surfaces, and first outer surface being an extension of said first side part and extending generally parallel to said first side part, said second outer surface being an extension of said second side part and defining a convergent section which is disposed as an acute angle relative to said elongate direction.

12. (New) A tongue depressor comprising an elongated main body extending in an elongate direction, said main body having an elongated hollow passageway, said main body having a first end portion and a second end portion, said first end portion having an opening contiguous with one end of said

passageway, said second end portion closing off an opposite end of said passageway, said main body having opposed first and second side parts which are generally parallel to one another, longitudinal convex slip stoppers disposed on said first and second side parts and longitudinally extending perpendicular to said elongate direction, said second end portion of said main body having opposed first and second outer surfaces, and first outer surface being an extension of said first side part, said second outer surface being an extension of said second side part and defining a convergent section which is disposed at an acute angle relative to said elongate direction.